

**URBAN GREENING PLANS
FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM**

PROPOSITION 84

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Last Updated 4/22/2011

Application Process

Q: When are the grant applications due and awards announced?

A: The solicitation for applications will be issued on [May 2, 2011](#). Applications for planning grants will be accepted until [July 1, 2011](#). Awards are anticipated to be announced late 2011 and are contingent upon inclusion in and enactment of the State budget and available cash.

Q: Am I required to submit a Concept Proposal Form to determine the eligibility of my plan before I can apply for an Urban Greening Planning Grant?

A: No, only applicants for the Urban Greening [Project](#) Grant Program are required to submit a Concept Proposal Form. Applicants with questions about the eligibility of an Urban Greening [Plan](#) should contact the Natural Resources Agency staff prior to submitting a full application for the grant.

Q: Is there a limit on the number of applications each applicant can submit?

A: No. There is no limit on the number of submittals per applicant. However it is expected that the applicant would demonstrate collaboration/coordination with any other similar planning efforts within the same jurisdiction.

Q: My organization has several eligible plans that we feel are competitive. Should we submit one application for all plans, or individual applications for each?

A: Submit one application for each individual plan. Each plan (as defined on page 2 of the guidelines) will be evaluated and scored by the committee on an individual basis.

Q: Will an applicant be penalized for submitting more than one application?

A: No. The committee will evaluate and score each plan on its own merit. However, as stated above, the applicant needs to demonstrate collaboration/coordination with any other similar planning efforts within the same jurisdiction.

Q: Can an applicant apply for a grant to create an urban greening plan and also apply for a separate grant to implement an urban greening project?

A: Yes. The Council encourages applicants to submit proposals for either or both programs, as long as the proposals meet the stated requirements.

Each application will be scored independently and must have no interdependence on the other application, either stated or implied. Each application should also note the future of the proposed action (plan or project) if either application is not funded. For an Urban Greening project, the budget should detail that no more than 25% of the total grant will be spent on non-construction costs such as project design, administration, or CEQA compliance.

Funding Specifics

Q: How many funding rounds remain?

A: This is the second of three funding rounds.

Q: How much funding is available in this round?

A: Up to \$5 million in Fiscal Year 2011/12.

Q: What are the minimum and maximum amounts that will be awarded per individual grant?

A: There are no minimum award amounts. The maximum request for funding is \$250,000. Larger grant awards may be considered for organizations that work together to develop joint planning documents that cover all jurisdictions involved.

Q: When must the funds be expended?

A: Because the appropriation of the funds is currently pending, there is no specific timeline. In the past, the timeline for bond funds has been three years to encumber (via the execution of a grant agreement) and an additional two years to fully expend.

Q: Are matching funds required?

A: No. Matching funds are not required for this program. However, the Council encourages leveraging all resources, including other sources of funds.

Q: At the time of application, does the project need to be completely funded other than the funds requested through the grant process?

A: No. However, other funds necessary to complete the plan should be identified and applied for and a contingency plan should be provided describing how the Applicant will proceed with the plan if these other funds are not awarded.

Eligible Applicants

Q: What types of organizations are eligible for this grant?

A: Eligible applicants are defined in statute as –

- Council of Governments
- Countywide Authority
- Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Local Government (city, county, city and county)
- Joint Powers Authority if at least one of the parties to the joint powers agreement qualifies as an eligible applicant
- Nonprofit Organization
- Special District

Q: Are Federal Agencies eligible to apply for a grant?

A: No. Federal Agencies are not eligible applicants.

Q: Is there a way for organizations that are not deemed “eligible” to participate in this grant opportunity?

A: Entities not eligible for funding are encouraged to partner with eligible entities as listed above. Collaboration, including partnerships, is highlighted in the guidelines as a priority.

Eligible Plans

Q: Is updating an already existing urban green plan eligible?

A: No. Statute specifies that grant funds are to be used “ . . . for the purpose of **creating** urban greening plans that will serve as the master document guiding and coordinating greening projects in the applicant’s jurisdiction.” [Emphasis added]

Q: Are Climate Action Plans or comprehensive General Plan updates eligible for grant funding?

A: No (see above answer).

For plans other than urban greening plans, please review guidelines for the Sustainable Communities Planning and Incentives Program. These Guidelines can be accessed at: http://sgc.ca.gov/docs/funding/Planning_Grant- Final_Proposed_2010_02_12.pdf

Q: Is a plan for creating “green” buildings (i.e. energy and water efficient buildings with reduced waste and toxic materials) or retrofitting existing buildings into “green” buildings eligible for grant funding?

A: No (see above answer).

Q: After reading the definition of an urban area, I'm still confused as to what qualifies. Can you elaborate?

A: To meet the threshold of approximately 10 dwelling units per acre, you need to demonstrate that your project is located in (or adjacent to) an area with existing **or planned-for** density of at least 3,500 dwelling units within an area equivalent to 500 acres. When determining your equivalent area, you can exclude open space, agricultural land, commercial, retail, etc. While the border must be contiguous, it need **not be symmetrical**. The project must provide direct benefits (e.g., within a 30 minute walk) and/or related environmental benefits (e.g., carbon sequestration, stormwater capture) to the urban area used to qualify for the program.

It is **important** to note that an urban greening plan is NOT limited wholly to the qualifying urban area and may include planning elements for non urban areas as long as the primary focus/purpose is for the qualifying urban area.

Eligible Costs

Q: Are costs directly related to the urban greening plan, but incurred prior to the project award date or after the end of the project performance period eligible for reimbursement?

A: No. Costs must be incurred during the project performance period to be eligible. The Project Performance Period is the beginning and end dates of the grant agreement.

Q: If awarded a grant, will the applicant be able to use an overhead rate for personnel and/or employee services?

A: No. All eligible costs must be tracked and correlated directly to development of the plan by specific project codes, employee timesheets, invoices, etc.